EXCURSION

PLANNED FOR THE

CITY HISTORY CLUB

OF

NEW YORK

BY

FRANK BERGEN KELLEY, A. M., Ph. D.

No. I.—CITY HALL TO WALL STREET
(Revised 1905.)

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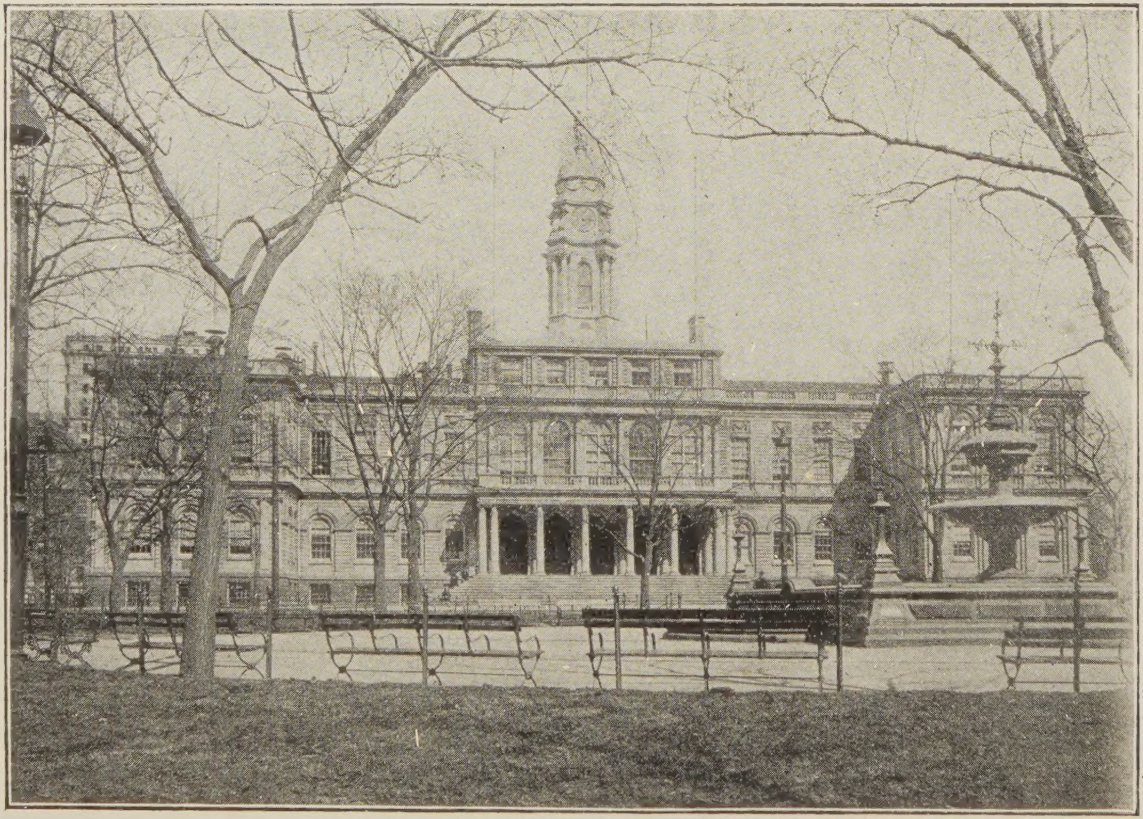


NEW YORK CITY HALL. Photographed by L. H. Haight, 1902.

Excursion No. 1 should be used in connection with the City History Club Plan of New York in the English Period (about 1760), in addition to the two maps on pp. 14 and 15. Excursions Nos. VI and VII cover the lower part of Manhattan and Nos. II and III connect with points north.

The following are recommended as short works of reference: Todd's "Story of the City of New York" (Putnam); "Historic New York," consisting of 24 monographs which are also issued separately as "The Half Moon Series" (Putnam); Hemstreet's "Nooks and Corners of Old New York" and "When Old New York was Young" (Scribner); Ulmann's "Landmark History of New York" (Appleton); Janvier's "In Old New York" (Harper); R. R. Wilson's "New York Old and New" (Lippincott); Innes' "New Amsterdam and Its People" (Scribner); Tyler's reproductions of various local maps and illustrations (Dunreath Pub. Co., 46 Wall St.); City History Club bibliographies. A. R. Ohman, 97–101 Warren St., publishes modern maps of New York.

Since the best authorities differ as to exact localities of many historic events, there is much room for error in a work of this kind, and the writer will be pleased to receive criticisms and additions, especially if authorities are quoted.

This route being a rather long one, it has been subdivided into three sections, each of which can be taken separately.

This part of New York was not settled until long after the Dutch flag ceased to wave over New Amsterdam. City Hall Park was the old Dutch "Vlact" (Flat) or pasture, later called the Commons, granted to the city corporation in 1686 by the Dongan charter. During the later English period and the days of the Revolution it was a place for public demonstrations, mass meetings, etc. It was fenced in about 1785, and an iron rail fence was provided in 1821, with gates on the south, west and east sides.

The main thoroughfare was lower Broadway, Chatham Street (now Park Row) and the Bowery. The shore line has been extended two or three blocks on either side. The King's Farm, which lay west of Broadway, between Wall and Warren Streets, originally belonged to the West India Co. and was later granted, together with the Jans or Bogardus Farm north of Warren St. (see Excursion II) to Trinity Church. Many of the street names have a direct connection with early residents.

EXCURSION No. I.

(*The figures correspond with those on Map I at the end.*)

SECTION I. CITY HALL PARK AND VICINITY.

(1.) **City Hall,** erected in 1803–12 on the site of the Almshouse. Ascend the spiral stair-case to the **Governor's Room;** see portraits of Washington, former governors of New York, Gen. James Clinton and Alexander Hamilton; two desks of Washington, the furniture of the first Federal Congress (which met in the former City Hall on the Sub-Treasury site in Wall Street), a section of Stuyvesant's pear tree, the Erie Canal punch bowl and flags carried in 1789 and the Mexican War. A good view may be obtained from the balcony.

Visit the **Aldermanic Chamber** where some interesting portraits may be seen. By special arrangement one may go up into the clock tower and on the roof.

On the first floor may be seen the **Mayor's Office** with its portraits of mayors and Lafayette, and the **City Library,** which contains many valuable books and records.

In the corridor see marble **tablet** (erected 1903, during the 250th anniversary celebration of the City Charter), between and descriptive of two tablets (originally on the roof of the City Hall) containing the names of the architect, sculptor and building committee. On the opposite wall see the Dutch and Federal **Standard Yard-Measures.**

In the basement are the Marriage Room, City Record Office, Bureau of Licenses and some rooms once used as prison cells.

Outside, under the Mayor's Window, see the **tablet** commemorating the reading of the Declaration of Independence to the army here in Washington's presence July 9, 1776, after which the citizens tore down the statue of King George III in Bowling Green (Excursion VII). A **tablet** in the sidewalk in front of the building marks the opening of the Rapid Transit Tunnel in 1900. Note that while the front and sides of the building are of marble, the rear is of sandstone (painted to resemble the front) used to save expense for the city.

(2.) Site of the old **Register's Office** (or Hall of Records), erected about 1758 as a Debtor's Prison; it became the "Provost," or British military prison (sometimes called the "American Bastile") in the Revolution and was the scene of great brutality on the part of Provost-Marshal Cun-

ningham. On the second floor (called derisively "Congress Hall") were confined prisoners of note, among them Ethan Allen. Beneath the building were four gloomy dungeons. The building was torn down in 1903 to make way for the Subway. During its demolition coins, buttons and human bones were found in the excavation.

(3.) **The new Hall of Records** is at Center and Chambers Streets. Here may be seen records of real estate dating back to 1665, and copies of many old maps.

(4.) **Fire Engine House,** the home of the first Volunteer Hose of New York (the "Mutual"), and once the headquarters of the Street Cleaning Department.

(5.) **The "Brown Stone" Building** occupies the site of the old "Rotunda," once used as the City Post Office until 1845 and as an art gallery.

(6.) **The County Court House** occupies the site of the old "American Institute," in the upper part of which was "Scudder's Museum;" the first savings bank and a few city offices were below. The present building is a monument to the iniquity of the Tweed Ring, which secured millions of dollars during its erection. Chambers Street marks the line of fortifications and British barracks during the Revolution, and a negro burying ground occupied the site of the Stewart Building across the street.

(7.) Site of the **"Liberty Pole"** which led to so much strife between the British garrison and the Sons of Liberty on the west side of City Hall Park, nearly opposite Warren Street.

Across the street, at 260 Broadway, was an entrance (now closed) to the pneumatic Rapid Transit Tunnel built under Broadway in 1868 as an experiment.

(8.) Site of the old **"Bridewell,"** or common jail, built in 1775, between City Hall and Broadway. It was torn down about 1838, the stones being used in building the old Tombs Prison. Its great lock and key are in the New York Historical Society Library.

(9.) **Statue of Nathan Hale** (by MacMonnies 1891–2), patriot spy of the Revolution. The place of his execution is given by Prof. H. P. Johnston ("Nathan Hale") as at Artillery Park, about the corner of 45th Street and First Avenue. The statue was erected by the Sons of American Revolution.

Cross City Hall Park to Park Row.

(10.) **Fountain,** erected about 1873, during the time of the Tweed Ring. The original fountain in City Hall Park was erected about 1842,

to celebrate the first Croton water, and provide for the disposition of its excess supply. It was much larger and occupied the site of the present Post Office.

(11.) **The "Sun" building,** originally the first permanent building for Tammany Hall (erected 1811), which had been organized at Borden's Tavern in lower Broadway in 1789 and moved to "Martling's" (corner of Spruce and Nassau Streets) in 1798. In Tammany Hall the term "Loco foco" originated in 1834. N. B. A good view of lower Manhattan and the harbor may be gained from the "World" tower.

Frankfort Street ("Newspaper Alley") was named for Governor Leisler's birthplace. At Nos. 5–7 N. William Street, under the Bridge, is a very good imitation of a Dutch crow-step roof.

(12.) **Statues of Benjamin Franklin** (designed by Plassman, and presented in 1867 by Captain Albert deGroot to the printers and press of New York) and **Horace Greeley,** founder of the "New York Tribune" (designed by Ward and presented to the city in 1890) are near the Tribune office. Jacob Leisler was executed for treason here in 1691 on his own farm.

(13.) **Statues** of Franklin and Gutenberg on the front of the Staats Zeitung building, Park Row and Centre Street. On this site once stood the **first Free School** building of New York City. It was erected in 1809 on what was then called Tryon Row, corner of Chatham Street.

(14.) **"The Vineyard Lot"** occupied the block between Park Row, Nassau and Beekman Streets, and the block below was called the "Governor's Garden" because purchased by Gov. Dongan in 1685.

The old Times and Potter Buildings are on the site of the Brick Presbyterian Church (built in 1768; used during the Revolution as a British prison and moved about 1854 to Thirty-seventh Street and Fifth Avenue).

On the block directly south is the site of the first Clinton Hall (1830), an early home of the Mercantile Library.

(15.) **"Theatre Alley"** (joining Beekman and Ann Streets), a former passage to the Park Theatre (1798), between Beekman and Ann Streets on Park Row. The theatre was burned in 1820, rebuilt in 1821 and again burned in 1848.

(16.) **New York Post Office,** the third Federal building used in the city for the purpose, built in 1875 on part of City Hall Park ceded in 1867 for $500,000 by the city to the U. S. Government. Near the southwest entrance may be seen a **tablet** commemorating the Liberty Pole and the battle of Golden Hill. At the southeast entrance is a bust and memorial tablet to Postmaster Pearson, who did so much to reform the postal service.

The narrow entrance to the Park Bank, at No. 8 Ann Street, was an exit from

(17.) **Barnum's Museum,** which faced St. Paul's on Broadway until it was burned in 1865.

The Loew Bridge was erected across Broadway at Fulton Street in 1867 to aid pedestrians, but was taken down the next year because so little used.

SECTION II. WEST SIDE OF BROADWAY TO WALL STREET.

(18.)—**St. Paul's Chapel** (corner of Vesey Street), the oldest church structure in the city, built by McBean 1764–66 (the steeple not until 1794). The interior was modeled after St. Martins-in-the-Fields, London. See the Montgomery Monument in the rear, in the Broadway wall of the building, and in the churchyard a cenotaph to Thos. Addis Emmett, and the graves of Beverly Robinson, the actor Cooke, Sieur de Roche Fontaine (aide to Rochambeau) and other famous men. A plan of the grounds with copies of the epitaphs may be obtained from the sexton. See within the church the pews of Washington and Gov. Geo. Clinton, the original sounding board over the pulpit and several tablets.

In the Trinity Corporation Building, at the foot of the yard, may be seen a number of interesting historic relics.

For detailed description of St. Paul's and Trinity Churchyards read Felix Oldboy's "Walks in Our Churchyards," published by G. G. Peck. See also "St. Paul's Chapel," by Chas. F. Wingate, and "The Montgomery Siege," by J. U. Harper, published by A. B. King & Co., 105 William Street.

(19.)—**Astor House** (north of St. Paul's) one of the oldest New York hotels, built 1834–38; its books contain autographs of many famous men. The building stands on the site of the old "Spring Garden" and "Drover's Inn," and was once the property of J. J. Astor, J. C. Coster and David Lydig. It is still in the Astor estate.

The first substantial sidewalks of New York were laid on the west side of Broadway between Vesey and Murray Streets about 1787.

Go west on Barclay Street to

(20.)—**St. Peter's Church** (southeast corner of Church Street), the oldest Roman Catholic Church building in Manhattan, established in 1786; rebuilt 1838–9, and recently remodeled.

(21.)—**Tablet** at S. E. corner of Murray and W. Broadway, marks the site of **King's College** (called Columbia since the Revolution), occu-

pied the land between Murray and Barclay Streets, Church Street and West Broadway (until lately called "College Place"). The ground sloped down to the river which ran up to Greenwich Street. This open space aided in stopping the great fire of 1776. The college entrance was on Murray Street, and for many years the gates were supported on four cannon taken from the Battery by Alexander Hamilton in 1775. The building was used for a time as a British prison. The college was moved to Madison Avenue and 49th Street in 1857, Columbia Grammar School, now at 34 East 51st Street, becoming a separate institution at this time.

Because of the growing traffic on the West Side, College Place (old "Chapel Street") was widened and cut through to Vesey Street in 1892, and lower Church Street was widened and called New Church about 1875. The line of the former sidewalk may be determined by the Elevated R. R. pillars on the west side. The horse-cars formerly ran under the houses between Barclay and Vesey Streets.

Greenwich Street was the shore line until about 1760, and a road ran north from it to Greenwich Village, passing Vauxhall a favorite public garden of the English period, lying between Warren and Chambers Streets. The first elevated railroad in the world was built on this street in 1866–7, running from the Battery to 30th Street. The experimental motive power was a cable.

Go down Greenwich Street to

(22.)—**"The Great Boot."** a name given to the rough-rock pre-Revolutionary building, N. W. corner of Vesey and Greenwich Streets. It derived its name from a great boot until a few years ago surmounting its roof, and said to have been carried in the Croton Water Procession in 1842.

In the vicinity (possibly on the foundation of this building) was the first light-house of New York and the old Jersey ferry-house. On the corner below, at Fulton and Greenwich Streets, is an old-fashioned building bearing the date 1809.

(23.)—**Washington Market**, successor to the "Bear Market," corner of Vesey and Greenwich Streets. "West Washington Market," formerly on the river front, is now at Gansevoort Market. The high lands near-by were leveled and the shore line filled in about 1787 to 1790. See old houses on Vesey Street opposite the market.

Go east on Cortlandt Street to Broadway.

On Cortlandt Street was a Dutch windmill in early days (hence its old

name of Windmill Lane), and at the foot of Cortlandt Street was the slip of Fulton's first steam ferry (1812) to Paulus Hook.

(24.)—**Tablet** (113 Broadway) site of the **De Lancey House** (built 1700), later the City Hotel (1806), and said to be the scene of the signing of the Non-Importation Agreement, October 31, 1765, but there is authority for believing that this took place at 9 Broadway. (See Excursion VII, Section I.) Thames Street, just below, was the carriage way to the De Lancey stables.

(25.)—"**Old Tom's** (Thames and Temple Streets) is said to be the oldest chop-house in New York, and was established about 1790, although the present building is modern. Much of the old china and pewter was used and English customs were observed until 1901.

(26.)—Two old **city wells** still remain in use at Trinity Place, between Thames and Cedar Streets. See old-fashioned buildings on Albany and Carlisle Streets.

N. B.—For an account of Trinity Church and points on and below Wall Street, see EXCURSION No. VII.

Cross Broadway and go east on Cedar Street.

SECTION III. EAST SIDE OF BROADWAY.

The Scotch Presbyterian Church (about 1760) was nearly opposite the Clearing House, between Broadway and Nassau Streets. The latter street was at first Teunis de Kay's cartway from Wall Street, passing around Federal Hall; it was opened in 1696, and was sometimes called "Piewoman's Lane." The upper end was called Kip Street for Jacob Kip.

(27.)—The **tablet** on the Mutual Life Building (northeast corner of Nassau and Cedar Streets) marks the site of the **Middle Dutch Church,** built 1727–32; this was used by the British as a riding academy and prison, and served as a post office from 1845 to 1875. The old bell, made in Amsterdam and given by De Peyster, is now at the Collegiate Church, at Fifth Avenue and 48th Street. It is said that Franklin tried some of his kite experiments from the belfry of the old building.

Just behind, at 34 Liberty Street, stood the Livingstone Sugar House, another Revolutionary prison.

(28.)—The **Chamber of Commerce** (65 Liberty St., admission only through a member's card) contains a fine collection of portraits of old New York merchants.

A Friends' Meeting-House stood on "Little Green Street" or Liberty Place, west of Nassau Street, between Liberty Street and Maiden Lane,

and the French Church of Saint Esprit (used as a British prison) on the north side of Pine Street, east of Nassau Street, built in 1704.

Aaron Burr's law office was at 23 Nassau Street.

Go east on Pine Street to

Pearl Street, "de Perel Straat," "the Strand," or "the Road to the Ferry" (sometimes called "Dock" and "Queen Street"), which marks the former shore line on the East River and was the road from the Fort (below Bowling Green) to the Brooklyn Ferry.

(29.)—**Revolutionary cannon**, northeast corner of Pearl and Pine Streets.

Aaron Burr once lived at 10 Cedar Street. The old de Peyster House, at 178 Pearl Street, was the residence of Gov. George Clinton in 1789.

Go north to

Maiden Lane, "Maagde Paatje," which was one of the three oldest streets north of the Wall, being the route between "Road to the Ferry" and Broadway. The streets between it and Wall Street were laid out about 1690.

A brook ran through the street from the vicinity of Broadway, as may be still seen by the hollow marking the neighborhood and by the old arches in basements near Nassau Street, built over a drain to carry off the water. Some say the banks of this brook were a favorite bleaching ground of the Dutch maidens, others that Maiden Lane was an old lovers' path. Here, at the edge of the East River at Pearl Street, in Dutch days, was Cornelius Cloppers' smithy, giving the name **"Smit's Vly,"** (or Valley) to this locality.

(30.)—The **"Fly Market"** once occupied the block east of Pearl Street, and after the filling-in process was complete two other markets occupied the two additional blocks to the east. All were torn down about 1821. Its successor is the modern Fulton Market.

(31.)—Old house at **208 Pearl Street**.

For an interesting description of Maiden Lane, Smit's Vly and Golden Hill in Dutch days see Innes' "New Amsterdam and Its People" (Scribner), Chaps. XX–XXIV.

Go west on Maiden Lane.

(32.)—**Old House** (1823) at the junction of Maiden Lane and Liberty Street. The bronze fountain in front of this house was erected (1902) in memory of Simon Sterne. Jefferson is said to have lived at the site of 57 Maiden Lane.

Go up quaint old **"Rutger's Hill"** (Gold Street) to Platt Street.

(33.)--The **"Jack-Knife,"** northwest corner of Gold and Platt Streets, is an old house once used as a tavern which was so changed in shape by the cutting through of Platt Street (by Jacob S. Platt in 1834) as to merit the name. It is best seen from near the William Street corner.

Go up William to John Street.

John Haberding (or Harpendinck) with some fellow tanners bought in 1695, **"The Shoemaker's Pasture,"** a district covering several blocks between Maiden Lane and Ann Street, east of Broadway. Here they carried their tanneries from the old tan pits near Beaver Street; later Haberding, having given his share of the Pasture to the Middle Church, they removed to the "Leather Swamp" above Beekman Street, near Gold Street, which district still retains the name of **"The Swamp."** The Vandercliff Farm lay northeast of Shoemaker's Pasture and gave the name to Cliff Street.

(34.)--**Tablet**, northwest corner of John and William Streets, marks the site of the street fight of Golden Hill (so called from a wheat field here) between the Sons of Liberty and British soldiers, in defence of the Liberty Pole, January 17th, 1770,—the first bloodshed of the Revolution.

(35.)--**"Golden Hill Inn,"** 122-4 William Street, was built over 150 years ago of brick from Holland. It was a favorite meeting place of the Sons of Liberty. Washington Irving lived at the site of 126 William Street, and Lafayette at 90 William Street.

Go west on John Street to

(36.)—**John Street M. E. Church**, the oldest Methodist Church in New York. The original building occupied the same site and was erected in 1768; rebuilt in 1817 and 1841. The church was organized in a sail loft at 120 William Street by Barbara Heck, Philip Embury and Captain Webb. Within may be seen a number of interesting relics, including a clock given by John Wesley.

(37.)—The site of the **John Street Theatre** (called the "Royal" in the Revolution and the "National" afterward) was at 15-21 John Street. It was built between 1750 and 1760 and here Major Andre performed original plays during the Revolution. "Hail Columbia" was first played here in the presence of Washington by Fyles, its composer, and in this theatre Joseph Jefferson made his first appearance. See the **arcade** at No. 17 John Street, once an entrance to the theatre.

Go north on Nassau to Fulton Street.

(38.) **Tablet,** 136 Fulton Street, commemorating "the Shakespeare Tavern," built before the Revolution, a favorite headquarters for actors and the scene of the organization of the Seventh Regiment.

(39.) **Fulton Street Prayer Meeting** (No. 113), site of **North Dutch Church,** built in 1769 and used as a British prison. Next door was the first Firemen's Hall, built in 1788.

The **bell** once hanging in the North church tower now stands in the churchyard at Twenty-ninth St. and Fifth Ave. (see Excursion No. V, 18).

See court and old style rear buildings at 59 Ann Street.

The sites of the Moravian and first Baptist churches are shown on Map II.

(40.) **Ryder's Alley,** connecting Fulton and Gold Streets, is a relic of the old days. The old United States Hotel ("Holt's Folly"), corner of Fulton and Pearl Streets, has recently been demolished.

Go west to Cliff Street and north to Beekman Street.

(41.)—St. George Building (n. w. corner), site of the first **St. George's Church** (1748–1852), now on East 16th Street. The original desk, pulpit and chancel rails are now at the church in Manhasset, L. I. See also **shot tower** (erected 1858) from the open court at the west side of the building.

Go east to Water Street and north to Peck Slip.

(42.)—**Revolutionary cannon** at S. W. corner. Ferry Street (west of Peck Slip) recalls the first ferry to Brooklyn.

(43.)—**Tablet** at 8–10 Peck Slip, erected by General Society of Mayflower Descendants in 1904 to commemorate the warehouse of Isaac Allerton, a Mayflower Pilgrim who was Gov. Bradford's assistant at Plymouth.

Go north on Pearl Street to

(44.)—Site of the **Walton House,** 324–326 Pearl Street (built 1754, torn down 1881), the magnificence of which is said to have led to the enactment of the Stamp Act.

(45.)—**Tablet,** on Brooklyn Bridge Pier at Franklin Square, erected by the Mary Washington Colonial Chapter, D. A. R., to mark the **Franklin House,** home of Walter Franklin, a merchant, at No. 1 Cherry Street, built 1770, and occupied as the first presidential mansion by Washington. Another prominent resident was Samuel Osgood, first Post-Master General, who had married Franklin's widow. The house was torn down in 1856.

Franklin Square was named in 1817 by the Board of Aldermen for Benjamin Franklin.

This district was formerly called "**Cherry Hill,**" named for the cherry orchard of Mayor Thos. Delancey, 1666–71, or for the "Cherry Garden," established about 1664 by Richard Sackett as a rival to the Dutch garden at Chatham square. At No. 5 Cherry Street John Hancock once lived, and here Wm. Tweed carried on the trade of a cigar-maker.

At No. 7 Cherry Street stood the house of Samuel Leggett, president of the New York Gaslight Company, where gas was first used in the city in 1835. At 17 Cherry Street lived Samuel C. Reid, who designed the present American flag. **Gotham Court** and **Blindman's Alley** were in this neighborhood, which is one of the most crowded and poorly housed districts in the city.

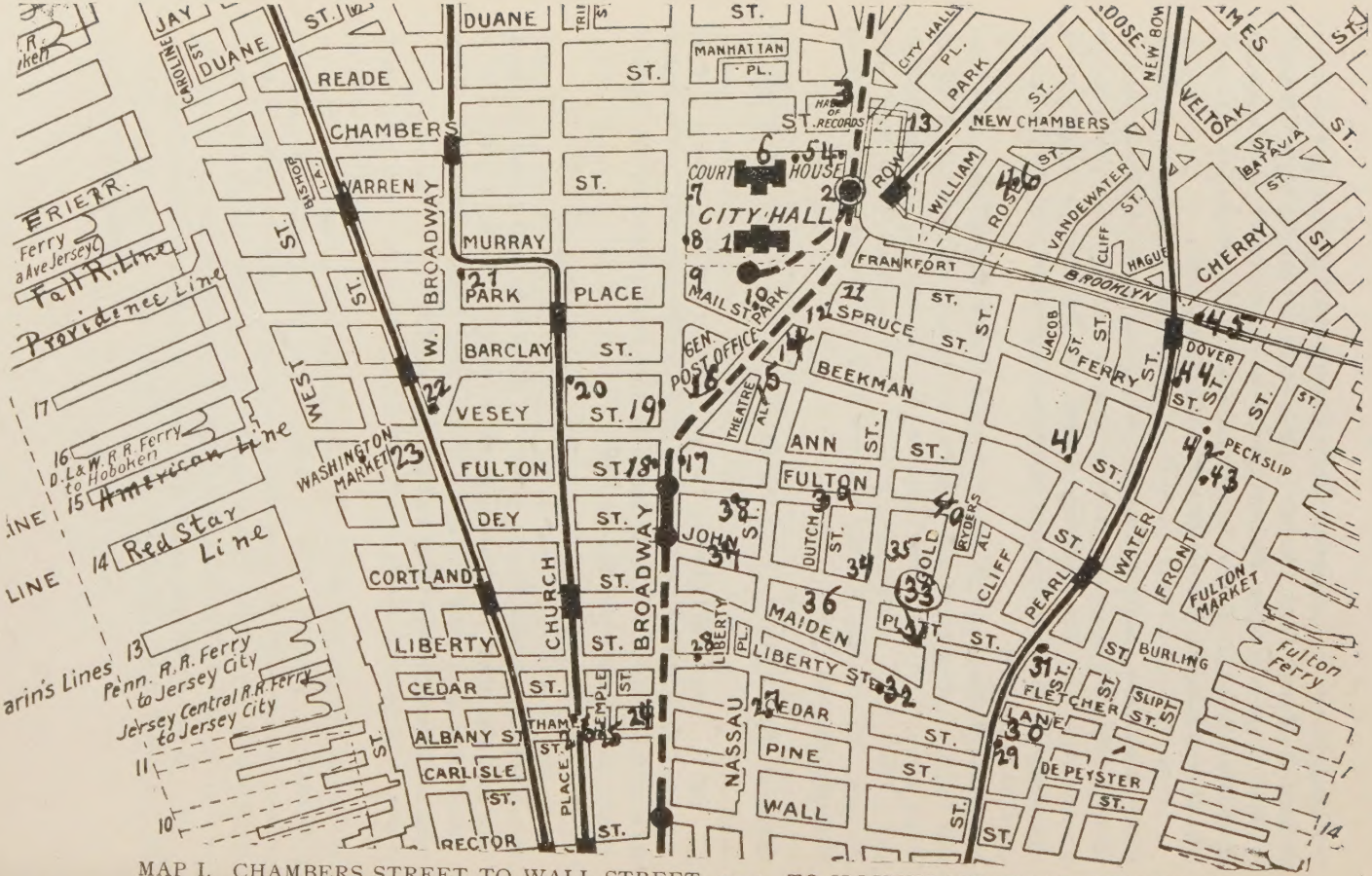
Through Roosevelt St. once ran "**Old Wreck Brook**" (see Excursion No. III, 20), thought by Innes to have been named for the wreck of Adrian Block's ship, the Tiger. (See Excursion No. VII, 11.) This brook led from the Collect Pond (vicinity of the Tombs) and helped drain Beekman's Swamp. The bridge crossing this brook at Park Row was one of three "Kissing Bridges."

Go west on Frankfort Street and up Rose Street beneath the bridge to Duane Street.

(46.)—**Barred Window** in the Rhinelander Building, once in the old "Cuyler," later **Rhinelander Sugar House** which was used by the British as a military prison and not torn down until 1892. Some of the original blocks of stone surround the doorway.

Go west on Duane Street to Park Row.

Chatham Garden once fronted on Park Row (old Chatham Street) and extended north from New Chambers Street. The high ground in the vicinity was once called Catimut's Windwill or Fresh Water Hill. There was a windmill here in 1662, north of Duane Street.



MAP I. CHAMBERS STREET TO WALL STREET, 1905. TO ILLUSTRATE EXCURSION NO. I.
Adapted from map of Manhattan, by courtesy of August R. Ohman, Map Publisher and Engineer, 97 Warren St., New York City.

INDEX.

G Meat Market.
H Fly Market
I Peck's Market.
K Oswego Market.
O St. Paul's.
P Trinity.
Q St. George's Chapel.
S New Dutch Church.
T Lutheran Church.
V Calvinist Church.
W French Protestant Church.
X Quaker Meeting.
Y Presbyterian Meeting.
Z Baptist Meeting.
a Moravian Meeting.
b New Lutheran Meeting.

SECTION OF A PLAN OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.
Drawn by Major Holland, Surveyor-General, 1776, from reproduction by Henry Dunreath Tyler, 46 Wall Street.
MAP II.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE CITY HISTORY CLUB.

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